

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIBREV 01644 141639Z

47

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 PC-01 IGA-01 L-03 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01 DHA-02 HEW-02 AGR-05 /088 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6957

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, PFOR, ST, US

SUBJ: U.S. ASSISTANCE TO SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

REF: LIBREVILLE 1467 AND 1563

SUMMARY: GSTP HAS GIVEN FIRST INDICATIONS ITS DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES AND AGREED TO MEET WITH AID ASAP, BUT PREFERS TO DELAY DISCUSSIONS WITH PEACE CORPS FOR TIME BEING. ACTION REQUESTED: AID SEND REPRESENTATIVE TO MEET WITH GSTP AT EARLIEST CONVENIENT TIME.

1. AS ANTICIPATED REFTELS, DCM VISITED SAO TOME OCTOBER 8-11 TO PURSUE DISCUSSIONS WITH GSTP CONCERNING USG ASSISTANCE. VISIT INCLUDED TWO MEETINGS (OCTOBER 10 AND 11) WITH GSTP PRIMIN TROVOADA.

2. GSTP DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: TROVOADA BEGAN DISCUSSION WITH NOW-FAMILIAR REQUEST FOR ANY ECONOMIC OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE USG COULD OFFER SINCE HIS COUNTRY FACING CRITICAL NEEDS IN EVERY SECTOR. HOWEVER, IN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT SITUATION INFORMAL SHORT AND LONG RANGE DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES EMERGED.

3. ESSENTIAL IMMEDIATE NEED OF GSTP, TROVOADA SAID, IS FINANCING
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PAGE 02 LIBREV 01644 141639Z

TO MEET CASH-FLOW REQUIREMENTS. SINCE NATIONALIZATION OF AGRICUL-

TURAL PROPERTIES SEPT. 30, GSTP HAS BECOME EMPLOYER OF 40 PERCENT OF ISLANDS' ECONOMICALLY-ACTIVE POPULATION AND DOES NOT HAVE FUNDS TO MEET PAYROLLS FOR MORE THAN ONE OR TWO MONTHS.

4. SECOND EQUALLY PRESSING PROBLEM IS UNEMPLOYMENT, ESTIMATED BY TROVOADA TO EXCEED 40 PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE. GSTP'S HOPE IS TO ABSORB LARGEST NUMBERS OF UNEMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR BY REACTIVATING PRODUCTION OF TRADITIONAL CASH CROPS (COCOA, COFFEE AND AFRICAN OIL PALM) AND BY DEVELOPING IMPORT SUBSTITUTION FOOD CROPS OF CORN, BEANS AND VEGETABLES. HOWEVER, EXTERNAL FINANCING REQUIRED TO MEET PAYROLLS AND TO MAKE CAPITAL INVESTMENTS.

5. LONGER RANGE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ARE, IN APPARENT ORDER OF PRIORITY, (A) TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION OF CASH CROPS; (B) BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT IN FOOD PRODUCTION; (C) ABSORB MAJORITY OF UNEMPLOYED WORK FORCE BY AGRICULTURAL SECTOR EXPANSION; (D) DEVELOP A SMALL FISHING INDUSTRY, TO INCLUDE BASING OF OCEAN-FISHING FLEET IN SAO TOME AND FISH-PROCESSING PLANT ASHORE; AND (E) DEVELOP SMALL TOURIST INDUSTRY. TROVOADA WAS PRAGMATIC IN ASSESSMENT THAT WITHOUT FOREIGN CAPITAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, NONE OF ABOVE POSSIBLE.

6. US ASSISTANCE TO GSTP: WHEN DCM RAISED ISSUE OF USAID OR PEACE CORPS ASSISTANCE, AND MORE SPECIFICALLY OF VISIT BY AGENCIES' REPRESENTATIVES TO SAO TOME, TROVOADA REPLIED THAT HE HAD MET WITH AID REPRESENTATIVE (SUBSEQUENTLY IDENTIFIED AS CHAMBERLAIN OF AFR) WHILE AT UNGA AND HAD AGREED VERBALLY TO AID VISIT. IN FIRST MEETING, TROVOADA WAS NONCOMMITTAL TO DCM REGARDING PEACE CORPS VISIT. WHEN PRESSED DURING SECOND MEETING, PRIMIN RULED OUT IMMEDIATE VISIT BY PEACE CORPS REPRESENTATIVE, CLEARLY STATING THAT GSTP WANTED TO MEET WITH AID FIRST AND EXPLORE ANY AVENUES FOR ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE THROUGH THIS AGENCY BEFORE TALKING WITH PEACE CORPS. DCM SAW NO EVIDENCE HUNGER OR OTHER CONDITIONS THAT WOULD JUSTIFY DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE.

7. COMMENT: EMBASSY REGRETS GSTP DECISION TO DEFER PC VISIT UNTIL LATER DATE, ESPECIALLY SINCE NUMBER OF EVIDENT IMMEDIATE STP NEEDS COULD PERHAPS BEST BE MET WITH PCV'S. WE ARE NONETHELESS ENCOURAGED BY GSTP READINESS TO RECEIVE AID REPRESENTATIVE AND URGE THAT THIS GSTP INVITATION BE TAKEN UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. DUE TO FLIGHT SCHEDULES, AID REPRESENTATIVE SHOULD PLAN ON ARRIVING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 LIBREV 01644 141639Z

LIBREVILLE ON FRIDAY OR SATURDAY AND FLYING TO SAO TOME SUNDAY EVENING. SHOULD COUNT ON REMAINING IN SAO TOME UNTIL FOLLOWING FRIDAY EVENING WHEN NEXT FLIGHT TO LIBREVILLE LEAVES ISLANDS.

8. FOR PC/W: EMBASSY STILL HOPEFUL GSTP WILL AGREE TO PC VISIT AND SUBSEQUENT PROGRAM. WE WILL PURSUE SUBJECT WITH TROVOADA AND OTHERS AS OPPORTUNITIES BECOME AVAILABLE. STEIGMAN

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